

VZCZCXRO2908
RR RUEHDA
DE RUEHDA #0024/01 0521010
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 211010Z FEB 07
FM AMCONSUL ADANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4440
INFO RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1043
RUEUITH/AFOSI DET 521 ANKARA TU
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0986
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0849
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ADANA 000024

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 20, 2007

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 20, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

¶2. EVRENSEL / GUNDEM / ZAMAN: Preparations for 2007 Newroz celebrations have begun in Diyarbakir, according to the Newroz committee that was newly set up in Diyarbakir in a press announcement. DTP Diyarbakir provincial chairperson Hilmi Aydogdu said that they would be celebrating this year's Newroz with activities held over a one week period and they were aiming to draw one million people to this year's celebrations. Aydogdu further commented that 2007 Newroz would play an important role in determining the fate of the cease-fire declared by the PKK. The committee will reportedly send Newroz invitations to President Sezer, PM Erdogan, Talabani and Barzani.

¶3. GUNDEM: The daily reported the anger of the Yuksekova people, when, a jeweler named Cevher Balin, who allegedly wounded the son of the DTP district chairperson on February 15, as the protests in Hakkari's Yuksekova district marking the anniversary of Abdullah Ocalan's arrest eight years ago were going on (see press summary for February 16), was recently released by the police. The mainstream newspapers reported then that the jeweler opened fire when a group of DTP members attempted to put pressure on him to close his business. However, pro-Kurdish daily Gundem claims that those news stories were reportedly misleading and DTP members did not engage in a conflict with any people on that day.

¶4. ZAMAN: Van police conducted a raid on the provincial party premises of DTP in Van when police received information that 10 people they were searching for on charges of shouting slogans and hanging banners in support for PKK, would attend the DTP youth branches' meeting at Van DTP. Police seized many documents containing illegal symbols and brochures describing the terrorists as "martyrs." Police detained 20 people including the provincial party leader Ibrahim Sunkur.

¶5. ZAMAN: National Security Directorate, following the meeting held in Anakra together with security directors of 81 provinces in Turkey, will hold a separate security meeting in Diyarbakir tomorrow with 12 security directors in the eastern and southeastern region to discuss security issues there.

¶6. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Abdulkadir Aksu, Minister of Interior, who paid a visit to Adana (see press summary for February 19), attended a meeting held with 13 district subgovernors in Adana. Aksu announced to the subgovernors that 30 million YTL has been allocated for the use of subgovernors to realize infrastructural projects for the villages.

¶7. EKSPRES / BOLGE The dailies report that the bitter strife between Adana Mayor Aytac Durak and Seyhan District Mayor Azim Ozturk has become apparent once again. Regarding the remarks Seyhan Mayor Ozturk made during the groundbreaking ceremony of a cultural center in Adana where he said that he was talking on behalf of one million Seyhan people, Durak asked, "Whose Mayor do you think I am? I would like to extend a warning to Mr. Mayor. He should be careful about his remarks." Ozturk's response to Durak's warning was: "I was wrong in my first calculation; I actually represent 1,200,000 Seyhan people and speak on behalf of them, not 1,000,000."

¶8. EKSPRES / BOLGE: Street vendors once again held a protest in front of the Seyhan Municipality in Adana and complained that the six venues the municipality constructed and assigned to them for their use have now been assigned to others (see press summary for February 14).

SECURITY

¶9. EKSPRES: An explosion took place in a cinema venue in Adana the previous day [Sunday] around 11 p.m. No casualties, but material damage was reported.

ECONOMY

¶10. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / GUNDEM: Chairperson of Bee Farmers in Hakkari said that all of the honey products of Hakkari were exported to the European countries in 2006.

¶11. SABAH (GUNEY): Sabah Guney daily, which has launched a campaign to encourage consumption of citrus fruit in the Cukurova region, made a call to authorities to hold a citrus fruit festival annually, similar to the one held in France's seaside town Menton, to stimulate consumption.

ADANA 00000024 002 OF 002

¶12. SABAH (GUNEY): The daily reports that the amount of snow and rainfall in January in the eastern and southeastern region pleased the farmers. If weather conditions continue to bring rain, the cereal yield in those regions will be very high, said the chairperson of Diyarbakir's Chamber of Agriculture.

¶13. SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / ZAMAN: Fatih Acar, Chairperson of Adana Tax Office, announced the start of Tax Week which will be celebrated between February 19 and 25. Acar said that they were placing great importance on educational campaigns to raise awareness of people about the practice of paying taxes. Adana Mayor Aytac Durak, who received Acar and tax authorities at his municipal office, pointed out that only when citizens pay their taxes in a fair and equal fashion, inequality could be eliminated.

¶14. GUNDEM: Mus, which remained the only province in the country that has not been able to conduct any export activities for the past 14 years, carried out export transactions with northern Iraq and Syria amounting to 2,036,000 USD in 2006.

CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT

¶15. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Police found 37,880 packets of smuggled cigarettes hidden in sections of a truck in Hatay's Reyhanli district. The driver of the truck and a person traveling with him were detained.

CULTURE / SOCIETY / ENVIRONMENT

¶16. SABAH (GUNEY): Spouses of nearly 180 municipality workers in Hatay's Belen district, who claimed that their husbands were not able to get their salaries from the municipality, held a protest and marched towards the municipality building. Spouses accused the mayor of paying the salaries of the workers he hired when his term started without cessation, but neglecting those workers who were hired during

terms of previous mayors. The mayor (from AKP), for his part, claims that there were too many workers employed at the municipality because of the wrong policies pursued by the former administrations.

¶17. EVRENSEL: A delegation from EMEP (Party of Labor) paid visits to the villages in Adana's Tufanbeyli district to raise villagers' environmental awareness against coal-powered plant that a company called EnerjiSa was envisaging to build in Adana's Tufanbeyli district.

¶18. GUNDEM: The blood samples taken from three brothers in Van, who were suspected to have contracted bird flu, proved negative.

¶19. EVRENSEL / GUNDEM: According to results of research by the Social Services Directorate in Diyarbakir covering the Surici, Sehitlik and Baglar quarters in the province, 3302 children are working in the streets there. Eighty four percent of those children are giving the money they earn in the streets to their families. 2742 children are attending school as they continue to earn their livelihoods.
GREEN